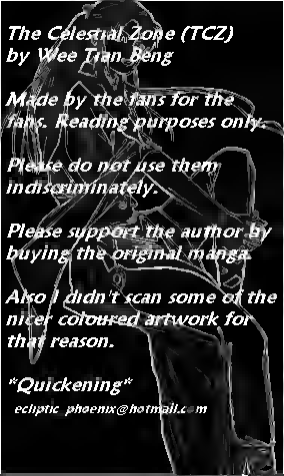
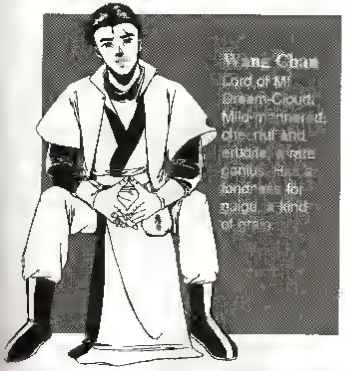

The Celestial Zone (TCZ)
by Wee Tian Beng
Made by the fans for the fans. Reading purposes only.
Please do not use them indiscriminately.
Please support the author by buying the original manga.
Also I didn't scan some of the nicer coloured artwork for that reason.
"Quickening"
ecliptic_phoenix@hotmail.com

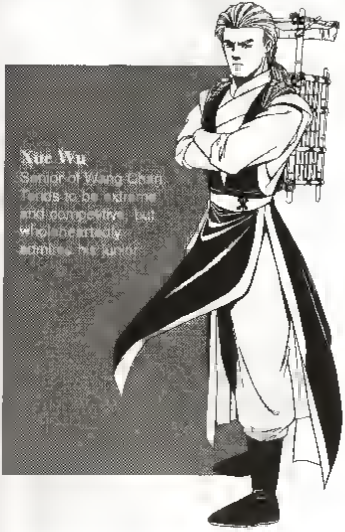
幸灵 • XING LIN

Characters in this Volume:

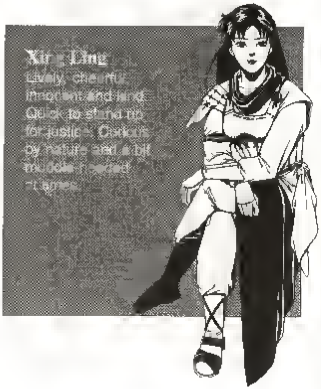


Wang Chan
Lord of Mt. Dream-Cloud. Mild-mannered, cheerful and erudite, a rare genius. He is fondness for sake, a kind of grain.

Wei Qi
Obsessed with wuqi, often pestering others to play with him. Chan's childhood pal of Wang Chan.

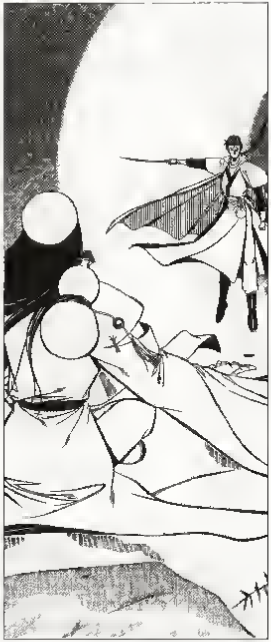


Xue Wu
Senior of Wang Chan. Tends to be extreme and competitive, but wholeheartedly admires his junior.



Xin Ding
Lively, cheerful, innocent and kind. Quick to stand up for justice. Cautious by nature and a bit muddle-headed at times.

Chapter Five
Battle on Moonlit Night *5*



Chapter Six
Would You Play Chess with Me? *31*

Chapter Seven
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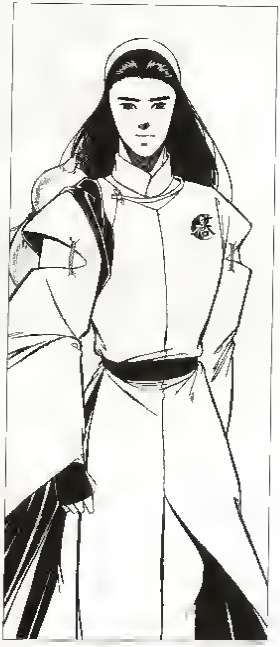


Chapter Eight
How Does the Name "Things" Come About? *107*

Recapturing...

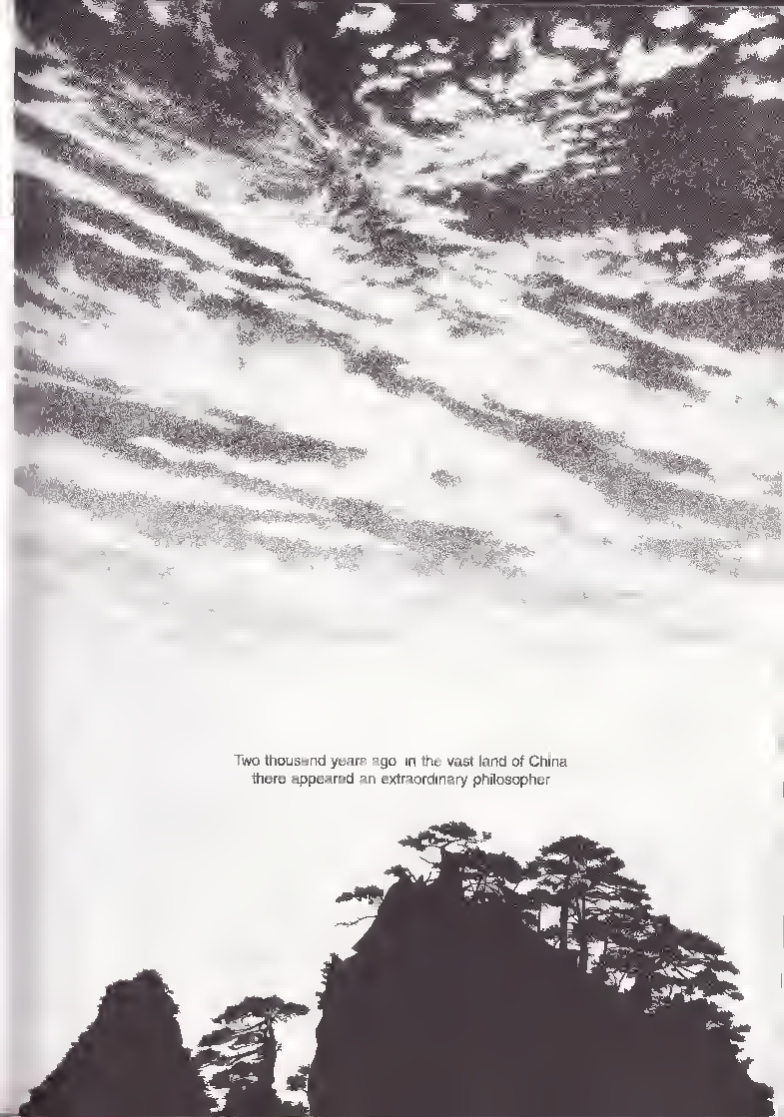
Xing Ling, a gutsy young lady with excellent skills, took delight in fighting bandits and protecting commoners. However, even she found her match in ghosts, the lowliest and weakest beings in the evil realm of the Celestial Zone.

Fortunately, Wang Chan and Xue Wu came to her aid and dazzled her with their superb skills. They had emerged from seclusion to deal with beings from the evil realm that were proliferating at a frightening speed.

Xing Ling witnessed the horrifying prowess of these monsters unleashed upon an entire village. This time, the destruction was wrought by demons, evil beings with even more power than ghosts. The adventurous Xing Ling was caught in a dilemma — should she join Wang Chan and Xue Wu as they hunt down the vicious monsters...?

Quickening

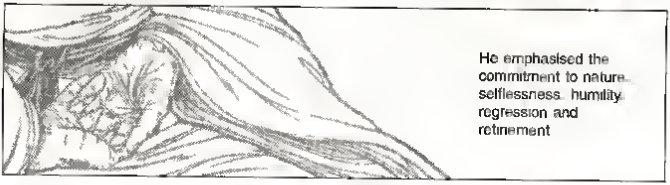
Thanks for reading TCZ!
Please buy the original manga!

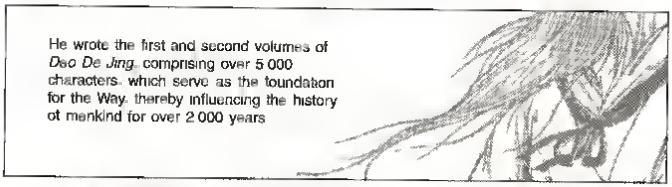


Two thousand years ago in the vast land of China
there appeared an extraordinary philosopher

He upheld natural orderliness...

He objected to the endless pursuit of material satisfaction. Instead, he advocated the cultivation of the mind...

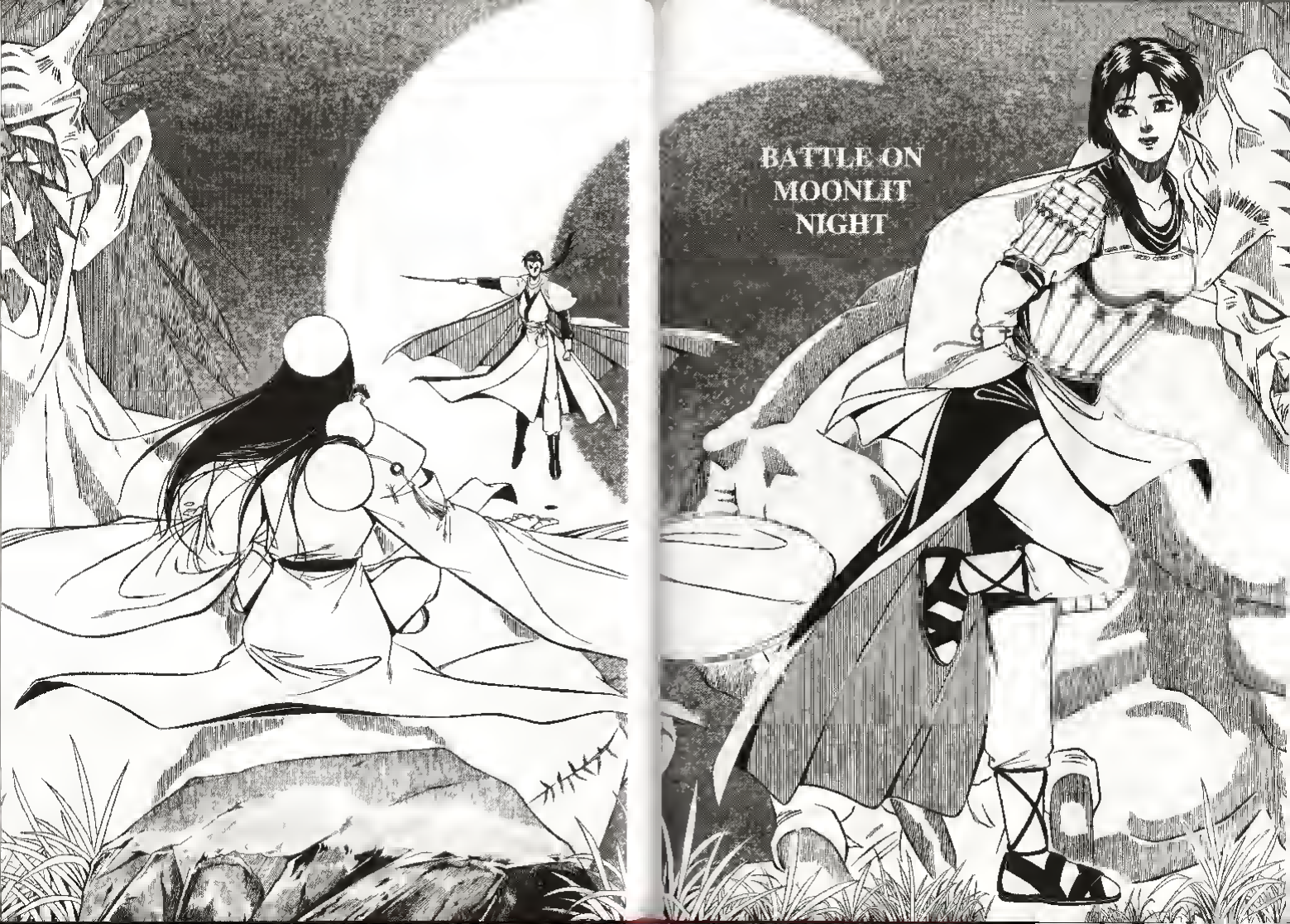

He emphasised the commitment to nature, selflessness, humility, regression and retirement


He wrote the first and second volumes of *Dao De Jing*, comprising over 5 000 characters, which serve as the foundation for the Way, thereby influencing the history of mankind for over 2 000 years

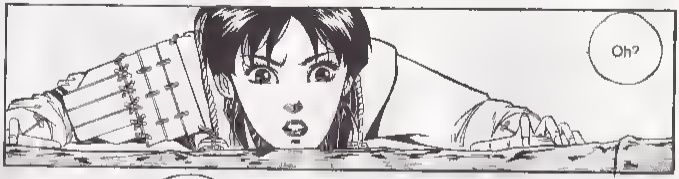
This great sage is known as
Laozi

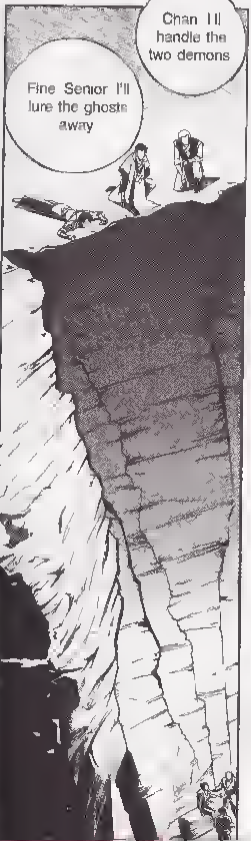
The Way is by no means the ordinary way,
Names are by no means ordinary names
Nameless is the origins of Universe
While the first name marks the Mother of all things
Thus observe Her wonders with no motive,
But observe Her details with deliberation
Though different in names they spring from the same root
Such is the Way, the mystery of all mysteries, the door to spiritualism

To find out more about Laozi, please refer to the write-up at the back of the book.


BATTLE ON
MOONLIT
NIGHT

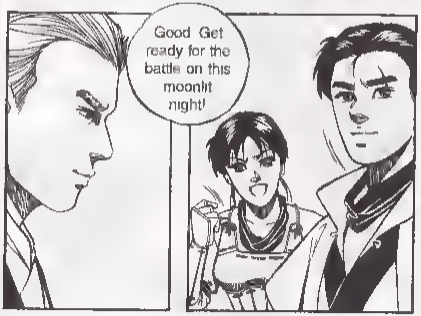
Seven of them! Xue Wu where are the demons?
Look carefully There are five ghosts of powerful physique and two demons of ordinary build.
But demons look no different from humans How come they're more powerful?
They can contain their demonic powers within their bodies These powers are even more destructive

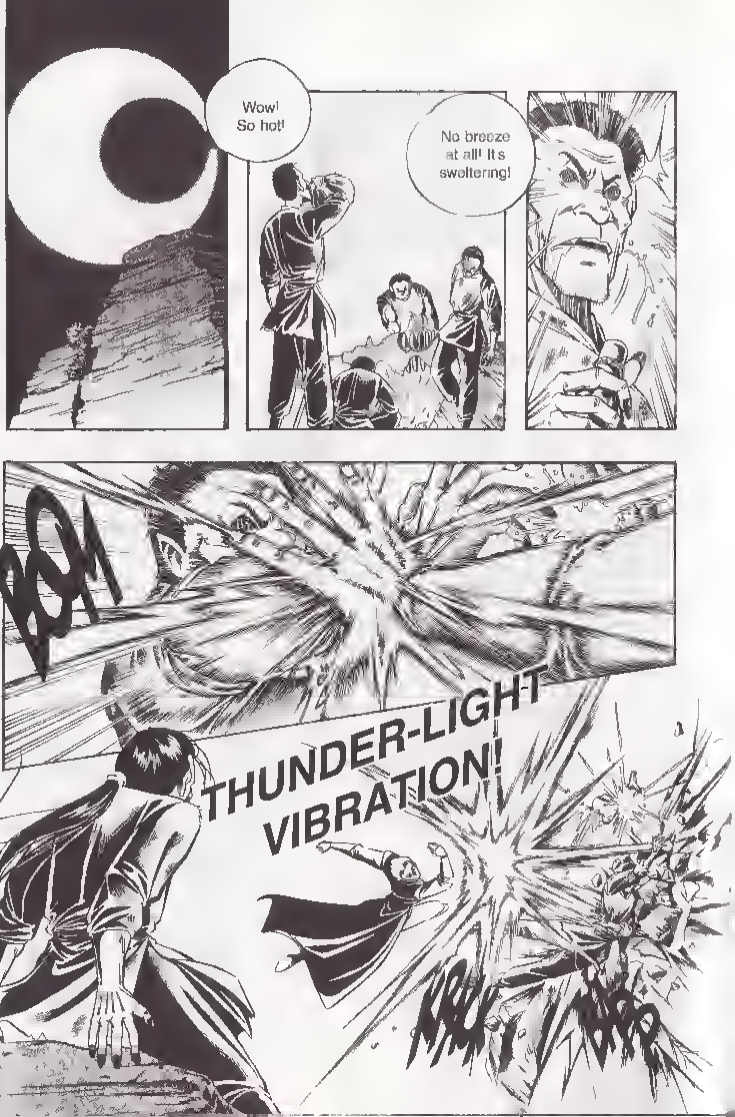

Oh?


Chan ! ll handle the two demons
Fine Senior I'll lure the ghosts away

Xing Ling you take the food supplies away Those mad beings may get so violent they ll destroy all the food!
The cart is heavy Can you manage?

Believe me no problem!


Good Get ready for the battle on this moonlit night!


Wow! So hot!
No breeze at all! It's sweltering!
BOM
THUNDER-LIGHT VIBRATION!

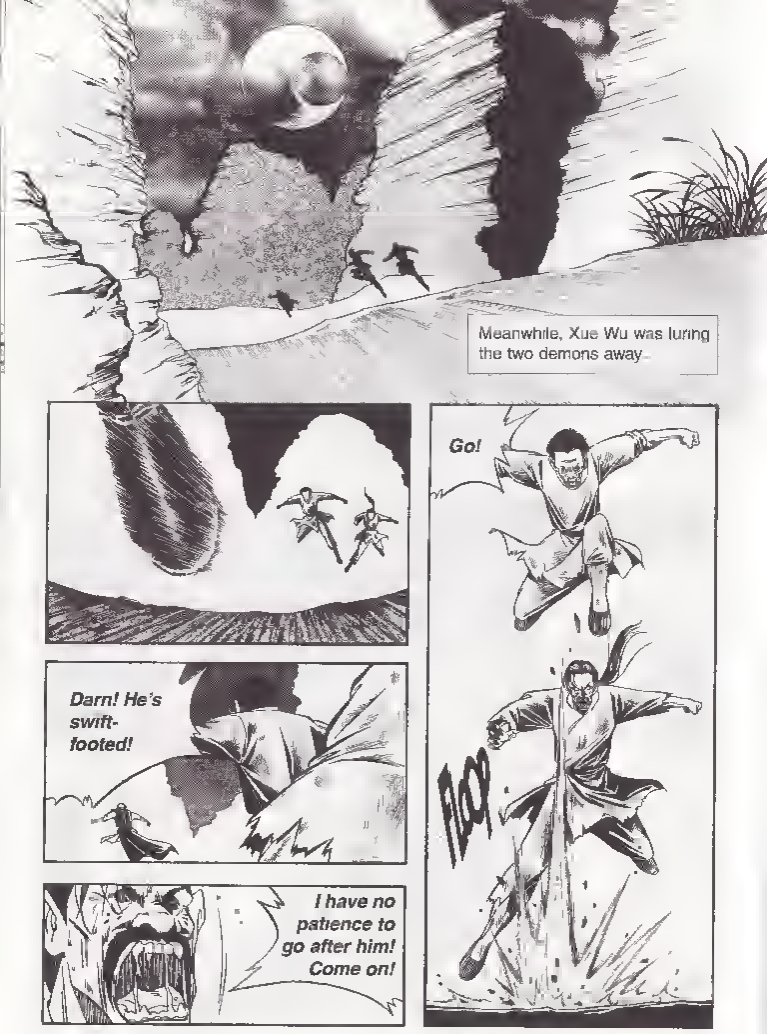
BOOM
BRR
Argh! So powerful!
Damn! He's from the Celestial Zone!
Don't let him get away!
SH

With the two chiefs around, we have no chance to fight!
Who dares to provoke us? He's courting doom!
Who's there?!
Sigh! I m the guy you want to meet!
Ha! Ha! You're just in time, boy!
BOOM

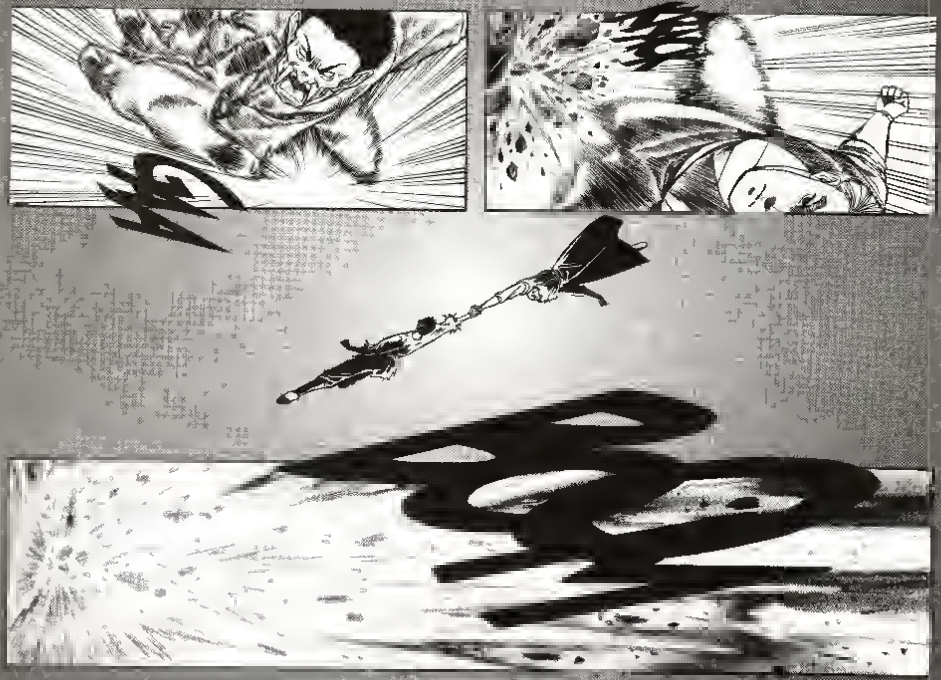
SH
BOOM
He's more powerful than the other one!
Newly transformed from birds, these few ghosts retained much of their original physique
Running away?!
He's not enough to be split among the five of us!
Ha! Ha! Whoever gets him first may have him!

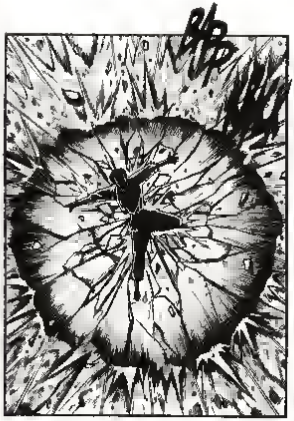
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!
A bunch of crazed creatures!
Ha! In their realm this is all I can do

Pant ! So heavy!
Still I'd better leave this place quickly
Ha! Get going get going!

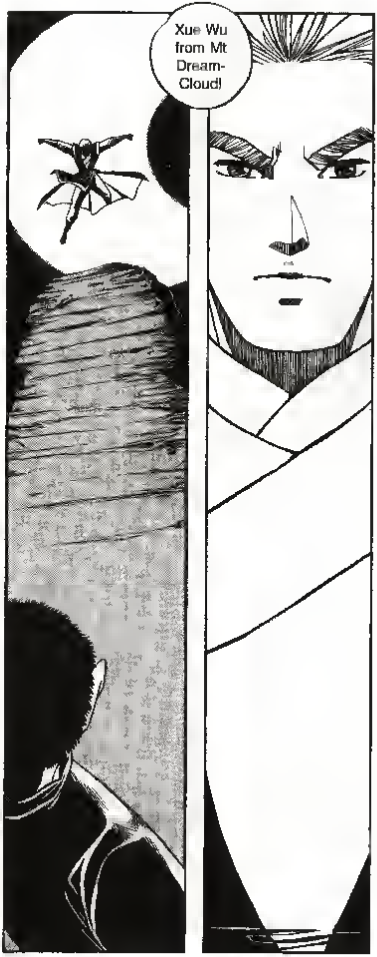

Meanwhile, Xue Wu was luring the two demons away.
Darn! He's swift-footed!
I have no patience to go after him! Come on!
Go!
flap

Hey! Let's fight it out here!





Ah... who are you?

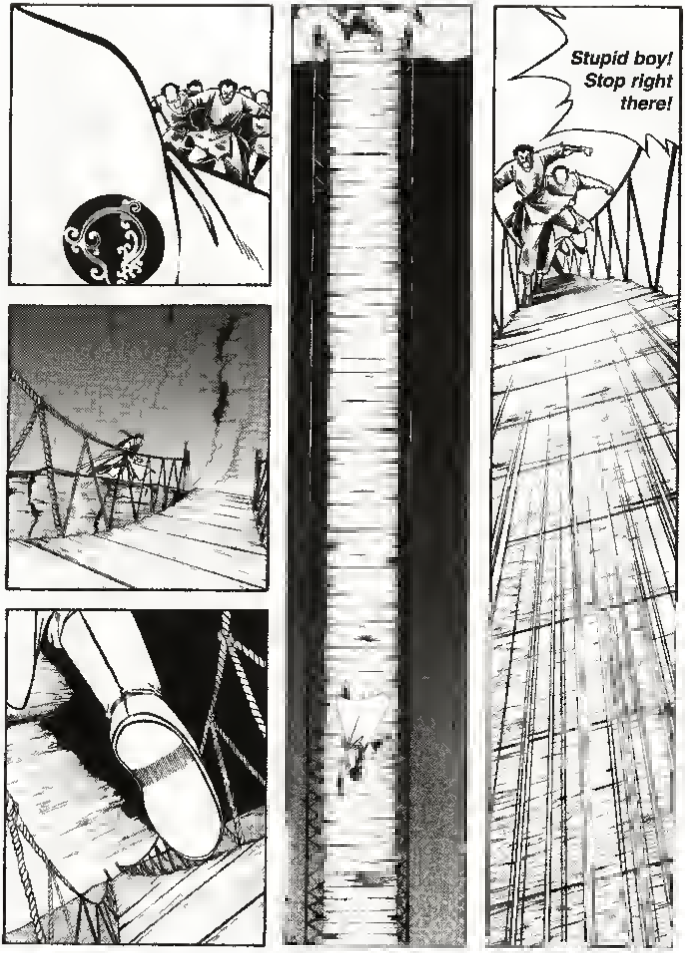

Xue Wu from Mt Dream-Cloud!

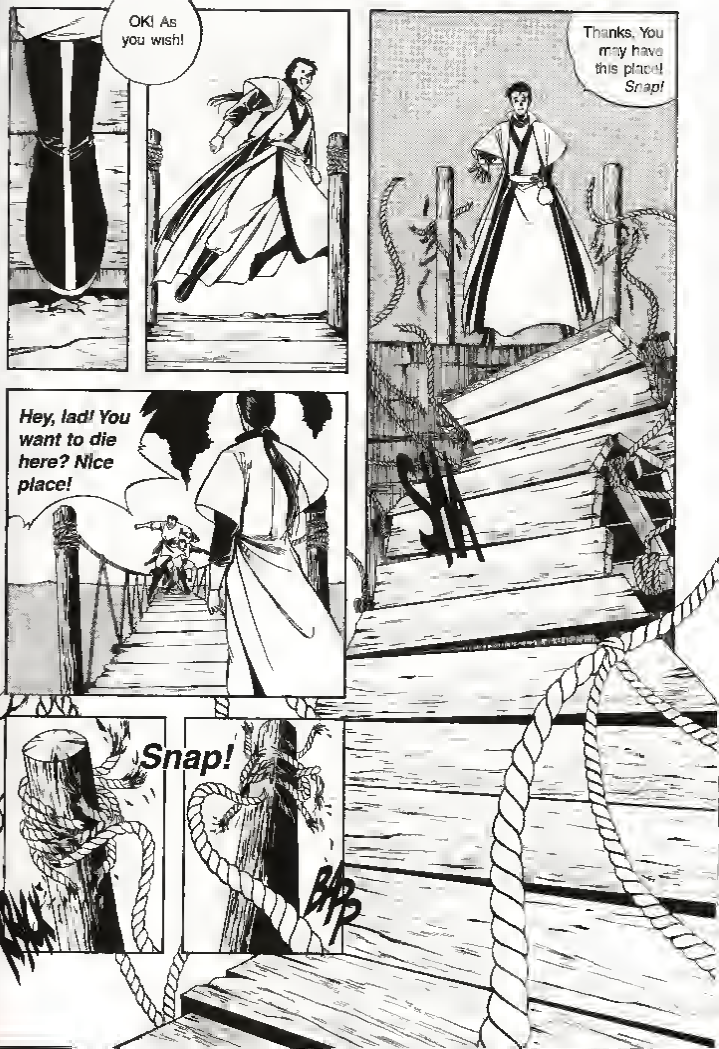
Mt Dream-Cloud... I One of the last two cities in the so-called righteous Way!
With our evil realm in power you should submit to us instead of struggle for survival!
Hey... I shall teach you a lesson!
Bah! Can you?
ROAR!
Haughty fellow! Watch our prowess!
BRP
KRAK
Flop

Hmm...? The evil aura has grown!
Ha! Lad, it's too late for regrets!
AAAAA
DEMONIC COMBINATION!
Tonight, you shall die a horrible death!

SABRE OF
DEMONIC ILLUSION!
Fine! I'll take this blow!
SKOSH

BOOM


Stupid boy!
Stop right
there!


OK! As you wish!
Thanks. You may have this place! Snap!
Hey, lad! You want to die here? Nice place!
Snap!
BRP

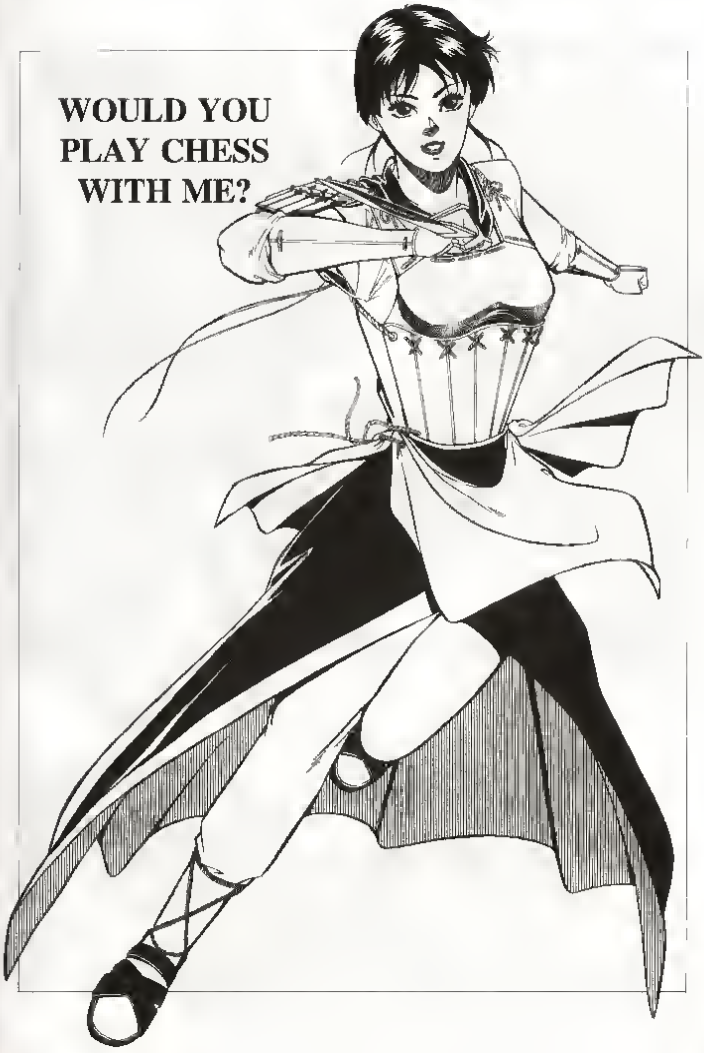
AAAAA
BOING
Ha, ha! I'd rather that you die!
ARGH

Meet your doom!
Boop
Ha, ha! Here I come again!
This is thrilling! Great!
Wow! You've got me so excited!

Ha, ha! Let's see where you can go!
Ah this is the right place
Ha! Handsome wimp, think you can beat us here? How naive!
Hello! You're bound to lose right here!

Pant...! Here at last!
Now I'll wait for them.
What ?
Hi! Taking a break? Nice scenery... Ha... I won't disturb you... By...!
Cheep... cheep! I was taking a nap but you disturbed me and took me here...
Cheep, cheep! Don't go yet. I should thank you.

Ha... I'd nothing to do, so I exercised a bit. No need to thank me
Bye!
Cheep cheep! I didn't say you could go
FLOP
SKOSH
Cheep ...!
BOP


WOULD YOU
PLAY CHESS
WITH ME?

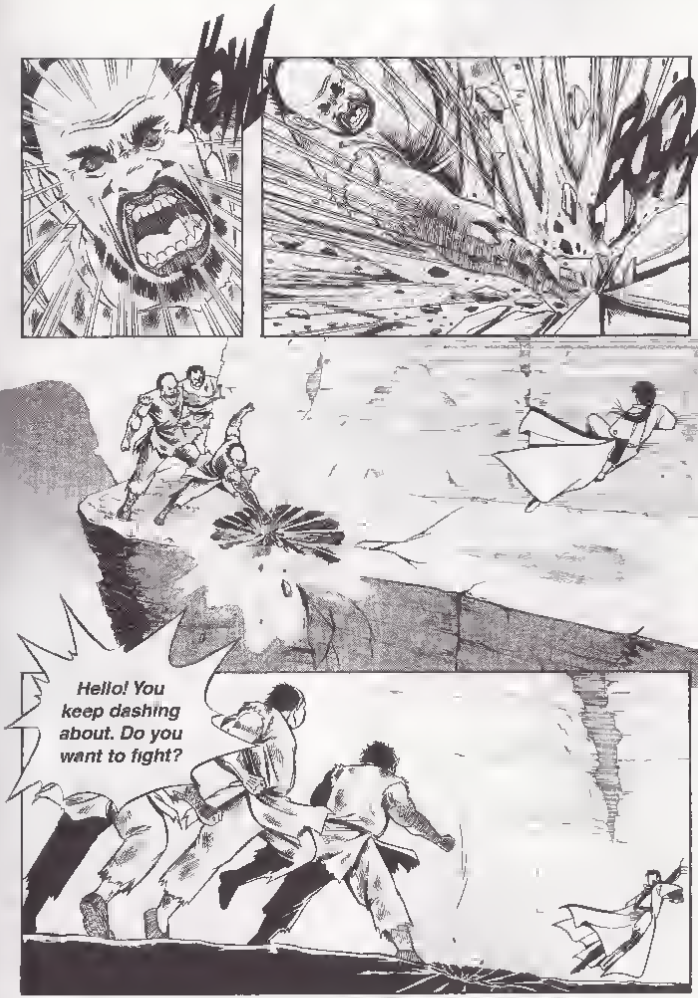
Oops! What a swift kick!
Cheep you don't seem to be from the Celestial Zone How come you're here?
SHOOTING STAR UP-KICK!
I chose to come here!
Aiyo! impressive!
SHOOTING STAR SUCCESSIVE STRIKES!
BONG

Bad luck If I take him unawares I may stand a chance
Pant, pant! Such powers! No ordinary ghosts could defeat you But
BOOM
BOOM
BAP
BAP
I might be half-ghost half-demon
but I've surpassed the level of ghosts after all – Cheap – cheap!

GLITTERING SHOOTING STARS!
BOOM
This is it!
GLITTER AGAIN!
BOOM

Cheep cheep... I've stopped you at last!
Argh! Stuck! How can that be?!
Cheep cheep Lass you're so pretty I can't bear to hurt you
Is she pretty?

WAH!
BOOM
So it looks like I've to smash your face first!
Oh no! My foot is numb!
Ooops! Sorry to disturb you!

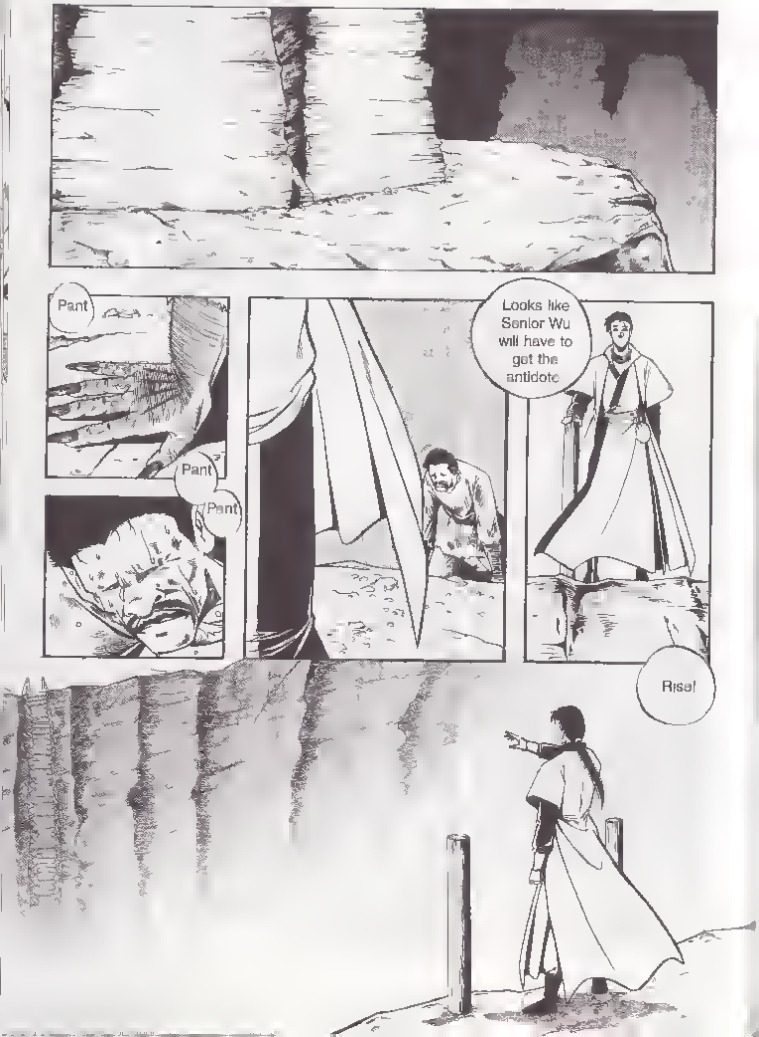

HOW!
BOO!
Hello! You keep dashing about. Do you want to fight?

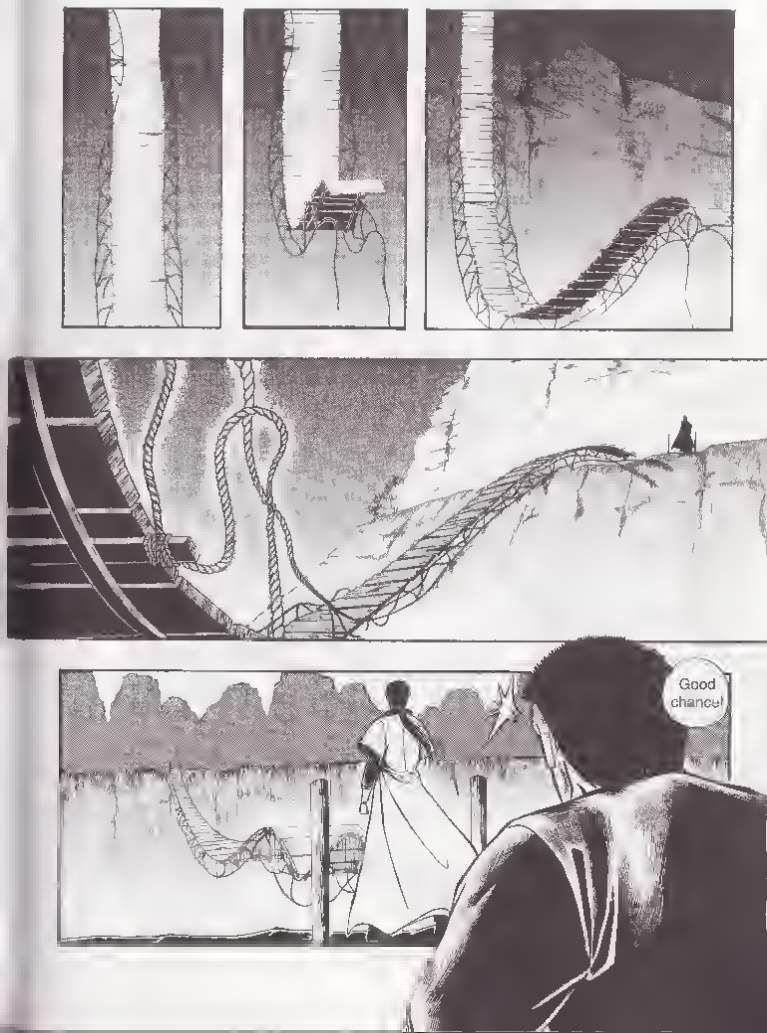
OK. I'll stop running. But I don't wish to fight. Now be careful
ROAR! What a nag! Fight with me if you're a man!
Ah!!
BAP
BOM
BOM
KRA
KAK

Argh! Let go! You'll get me killed!
Let me go!
Keep still or we'll die!
Damn! Shut up and climb up!

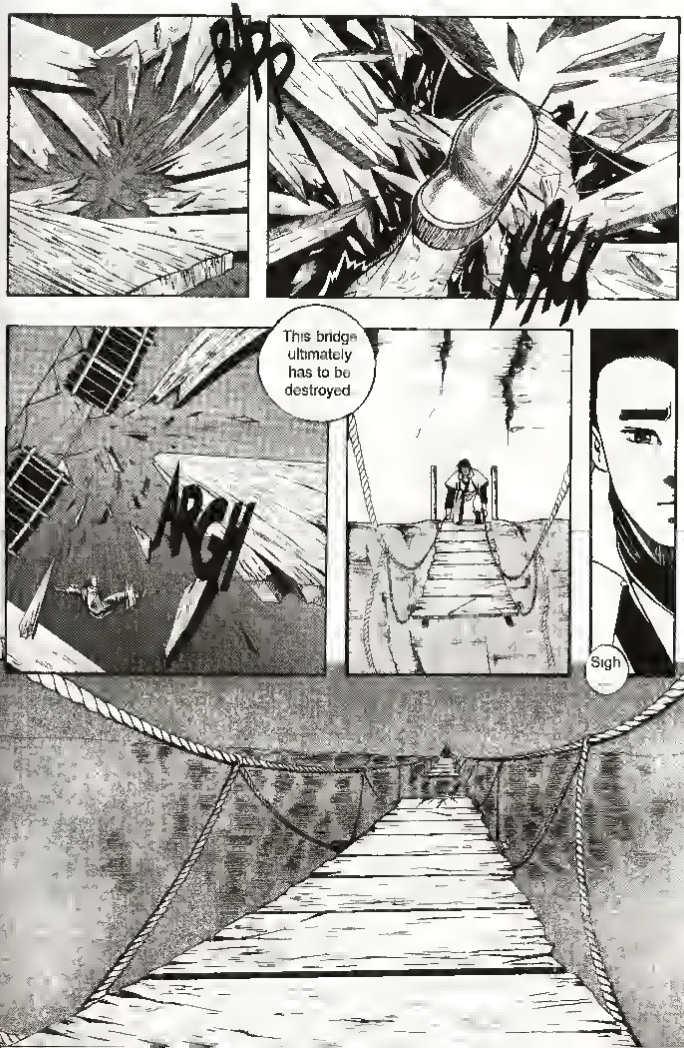
Hoop
Taking advantage of the terrain to subdue the enemy is an art of war
The surrounding weak rocks won't give way under the weight of humans
But they can't withstand your demonic powers!
I've warned you to be carefut
Stop it Just save me!
AAAA

You poisoned a village this morning. Give me the antidote and I'll save you.
Antidote? What antidote? I know nothing about it
Oh... The senior demons are responsible. We juniors can't do that yet
It's the truth?
Of course I won't dare fool you when I'm in this plight. Quick.
Help!

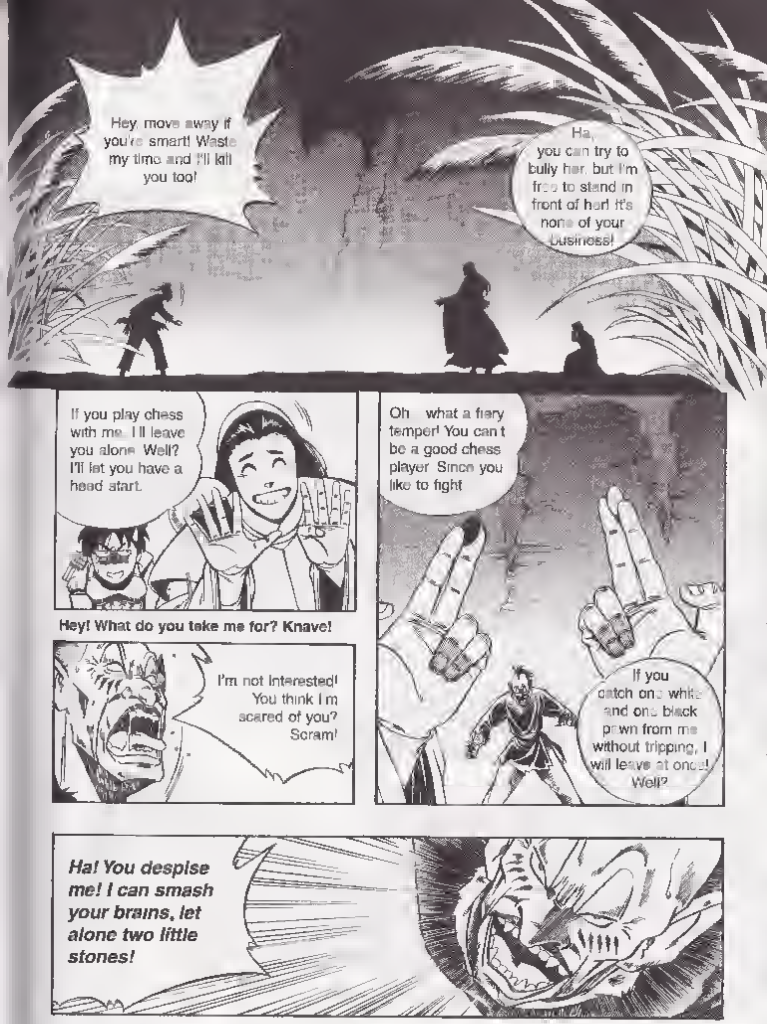

Pant
Pant
Pant
Looks like Senior Wu will have to get the antidote
Rise!


Good chance!

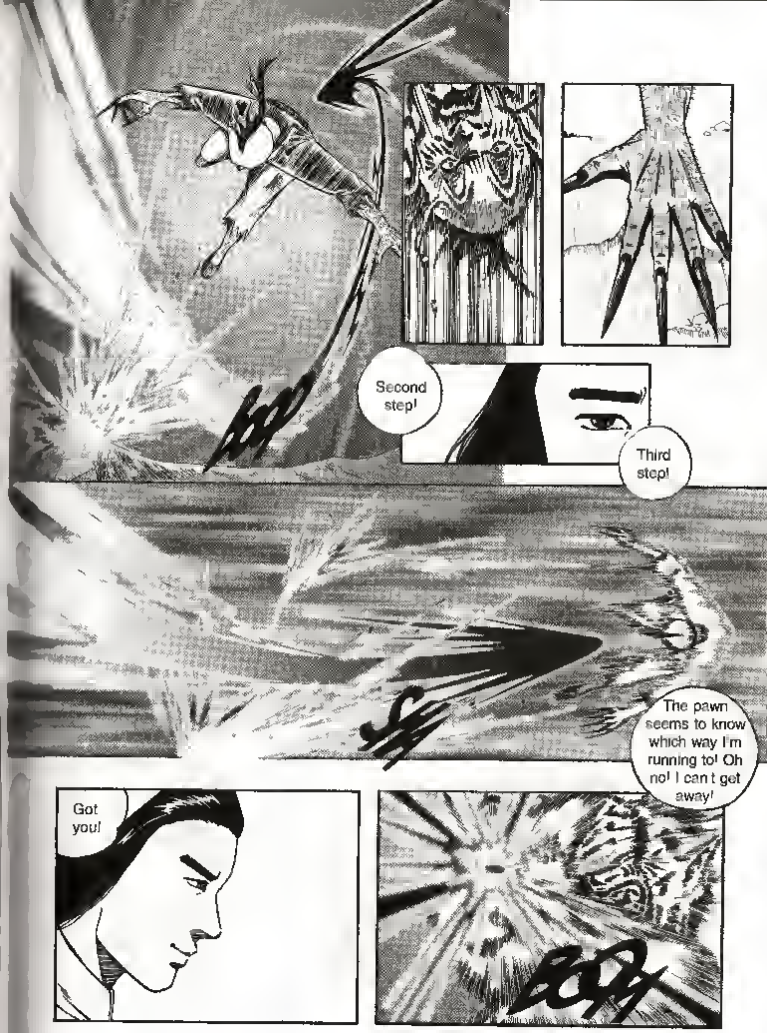
Rascal! Down you go!
Must you shout so loudly when you want to jump?
ARGH


BRR
KRACK
This bridge ultimately has to be destroyed
ARGH
Sigh

Sorry to bother you
Him?
Who are you?
BRp
I'm a chess player cultivating the Way As I couldn t sleep I took a stroll hoping to find someone to play chess with me By chance we've met My friend would you play chess with me?
Such nonsense But since he could take my blow he s no mediocrity!


Hey, move away if you're smart! Waste my time and I'll kill you too!
Ha, you can try to bully her, but I'm free to stand in front of her! It's none of your business!
If you play chess with me, I'll leave you alone. Well? I'll let you have a head start.
Oh... what a fiery temper! You can't be a good chess player. Since you like to fight
Hey! What do you take me for? Knave!
I'm not interested! You think I'm scared of you? Scram!
If you catch one white and one black pawn from me without tripping, I will leave at once! Well?
Ha! You despise me! I can smash your brains, let alone two little stones!

UNCERTAIN QIAN KUN -
ULTIMATE YIN!
Can you? Try catching the black pawn!
Oh no! Such a strong force!
Retreat!
First step!


Second step!
Third step!
The pawn seems to know which way I'm running to! Oh no! I can't get away!
Got you!

* It's a combination of the GHOST INCARNATION and DEMONIC COMBINATION

Ho ho! The same trick again! We're tired of it! Hurry up!
Poor Xing Ling — no chance to perform
Rascal!
Come! My body is as strong as steel! I'm not afraid of stones!
BOOM
BOOM
Good! Let's not waste time then! Catch this!
SHOOT

THE ALL-DESTRUCTIVE JUNIOR YANG!
BAPOW
KRAK
Huh! The force is immobilising me!
Come on! Reinforce the combination!
Take this!

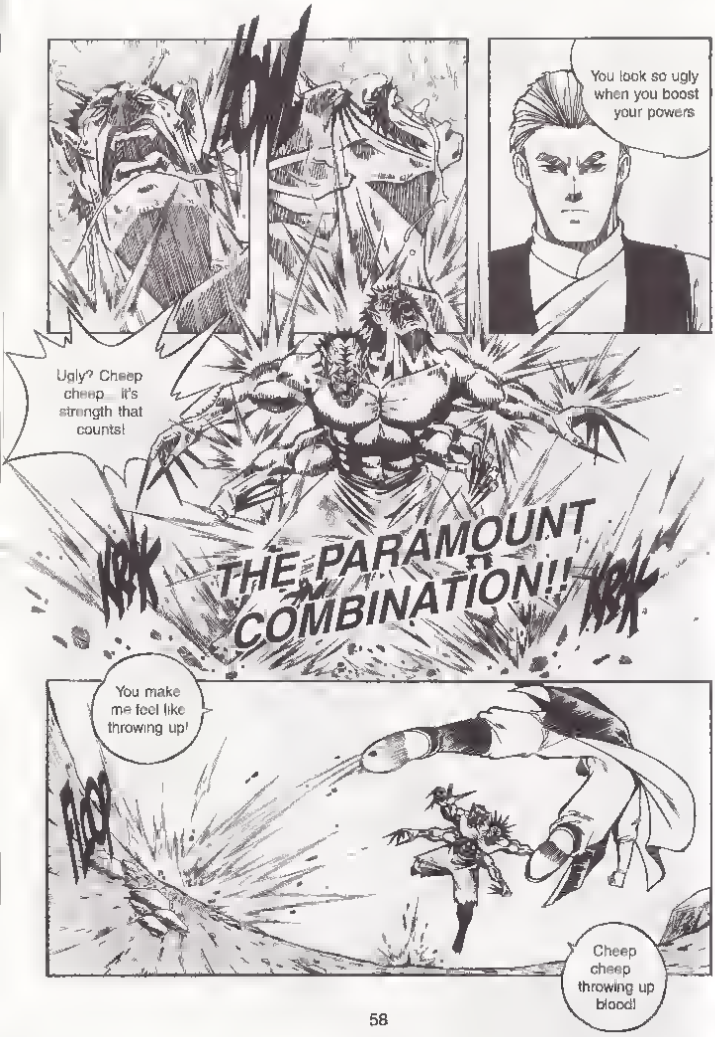
BOM
SHA
SHA
Sigh... as I expected no kick at all...
SHA
SHA

SWA
HOO
BRRP
BRRP
BRRP
BRRP
SSSH

Thank thank you
Ha! Here we meet again! You helped me this morning so we're quits
I see you're from the Celestial Zone too
I didn't expect to get into trouble with them It's almost time He should be on his way back
Who?
Ha! You'll see Actually I came to ask a favour of you
Oh...?

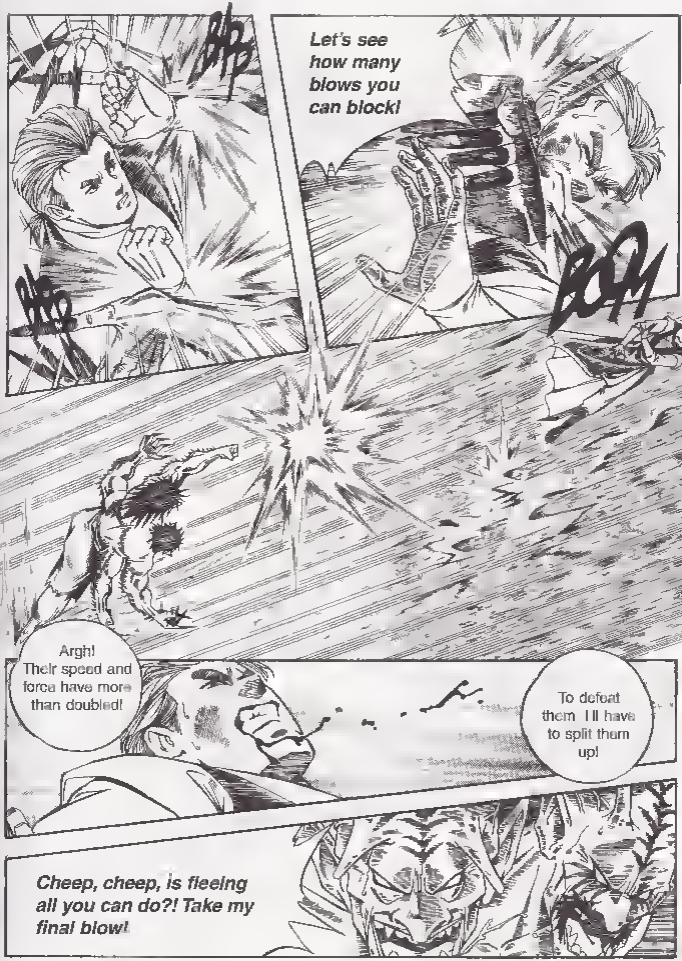
Hey the demonic powers are much stronger than those buffaloes! But...
What a pity! It's still a letdown...
What?! Still alive?
Really? Looks like I've to use my special powers to make them admit defeat
Easy. That fellow is only acting cool! I don't believe I didn't hurt him!

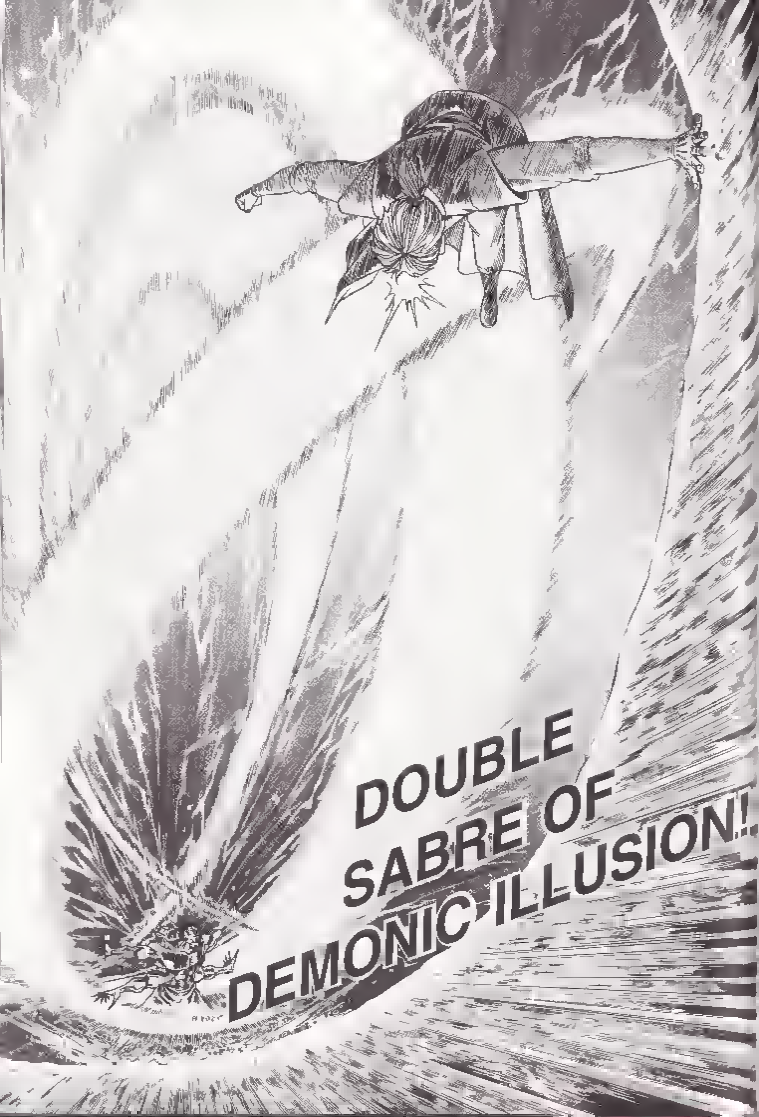
Old Wizard, beware He wasn't felled by the Demonic Sabre. Don't take him lightly — we may not win one-on-one
How about giving him a taste of the Demonic Combination?
Cheep... give it to him then!
Ha! Show me whatever powers you possess!
BHP
KO!

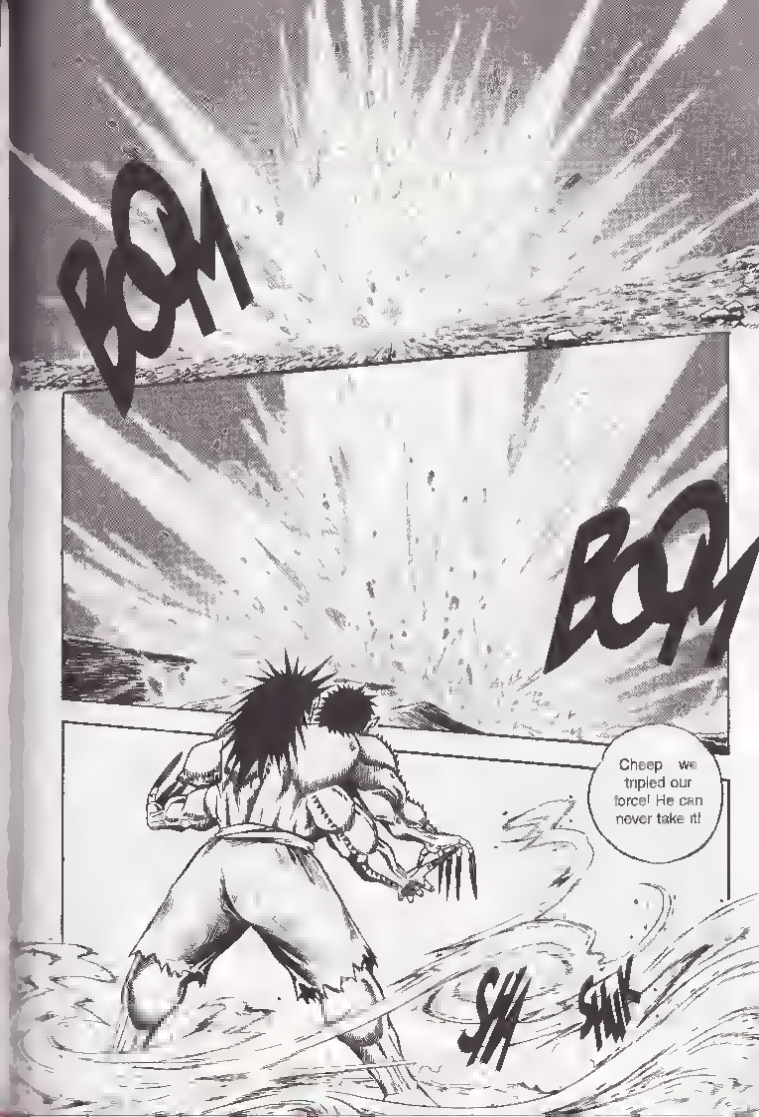

You look so ugly when you boost your powers
Ugly? Cheep cheep... it's strength that counts!
THE PARAMOUNT COMBINATION!!
You make me feel like throwing up!
Cheep cheep throwing up blood!

flap
BIPP
Cheep cheep so fast!
WOOSH

BOOM
SHK
BOOM
BOOM
FLOOP


Let's see how many blows you can block!
BOOM
Argh! Their speed and force have more than doubled!
To defeat them I'll have to split them up!
Cheep, cheep, is fleeing all you can do?! Take my final blow!


DOUBLE
SABRE OF
DEMONIC ILLUSION!


BOOM
BOOM
Cheep we tripled our force! He can never take it!
SHK
SHAK

Huh? He's missing –
SHUK
?
Up there!
THUNDER-LIGHT VIBRATION!

SPLIT!
KRAAKSH

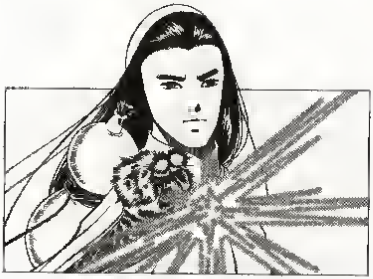
GAA
Listen! You have only one alternative!
BOING
You poisoned an entire village this morning. Hand the antidote over!
HSSH
Ah... antidote??

If you don't want to end up like him, you'd better be wise!

Ha! Antidote? What antidote? We did poison the village, but we have no antidote!
Ha! We're out to kill! Would we make antidote to save anybody?
Only an idiot would do such a foolish and unnecessary thing! Ha! Ha!
What!
Flop
Despicable!
Come on! We have the whole village to perish with us! It's worth it!

BOOM
KRAK
HSSH
Fiend!

Quickening



CHESS - WEI QI

Six...
Five...
Four
Three
Two
Oops! There was a fight here! Xing Ling are you OK?
Oh! You re really back!
A friend told me to count down from 68 and you ll be back! True enough!
Ah! You re injured! What happened?

I'm sorry. I didn't know a demon was hiding in the cart and got you into trouble. Sorry!
It's OK. Actually... I'm just lousy.
Sigh... If only I had super powers too!
Xing Ling, I guess you think a big tree is stronger than a small one?
Oh? Of course....
W-tch!
?
THE WHIRLWIND RISE!

SHIK

The big trees collapsed under the might of the whirlwind
But grass, which is pliable, sways with the wind!
That shows strength may not be superior to vulnerability
Xing Ling nothing is absolute in this world. Strength may overcome fragility and vice versa
Strength does not hinge on size, but on how the user manipulates it
With your intelligence I'm sure you can understand
That friend I met told me to pass this black pawn to you. He said you know what it means. Do you know each other well?
Ah Sigh
Ha.
Am I so bright???
Doesn't actually understand

Ha! He! We're buddies! Ha! He! Chan, you're going to have a headache!
Ah! Senior, you're injured!
I underestimated my enemies their strength measured up to 60% of mine!
The demonic powers are stronger than we expected.
We need only use 30% of our strength to overcome the ghosts.
But the demons required you to use 60% — By deduction.
The evil spirits are on a par with you! And the supreme evil beings...
Hmm. Senior, there's a tough road ahead of us.

I, Xue Wu, have no fear of evil!

It's dawn soon. Xue Wu, have you got the antidote?
No!

What?!

They only produced poisons, not antidotes!
What shall we do then?

Be calm. Let's make another trip to the village

Ah!!
Look...!
?
Ah! Wang! They're back!
Friends Ah! Our stuff!
Quick! Get the rest to come over! This is wonderful!

They... look all right?!
Friends, thank you!

Don t mention it Sir are you all right?

Yes. The moment we woke up we felt much better!

How come? Did anything happen here last night?

Nothing happened Oh yes in my sleep I felt as if somebody pricked me with a needle!
After the prick..I felt much better!
I slept till this morning When I woke up most of the lumps were gone!

Oh? How do you feel now? Any pain?
Pain? Not at all! I feel great! I even looked for food
Wang, this...
We found this cloth when we woke up. But we can't read what's written there.
Hmm... may I give you a checkup? It's to check the poison
Fine!

Most of the poison is gone.
Chan...how did it happen?
Senior, have you heard of the legendary acupuncture known as the Mystical Twelve Earthly Branches?
Mystical Twelve Earthly Branches?

Right. It's a special acupuncture that works by combining time, physique and weather to perform miracles!
But nobody has ever witnessed it. Here, I suspect that the villagers were saved by that art.
The prescription listed on the cloth is for clearing poison. The herbs are also found in the hills nearby.
The person who wrote it must be an expert in medicinal herbs
So the worst is over for the villagers?
Right
Wow! Hip, hip, hurray! Ha! Ha!

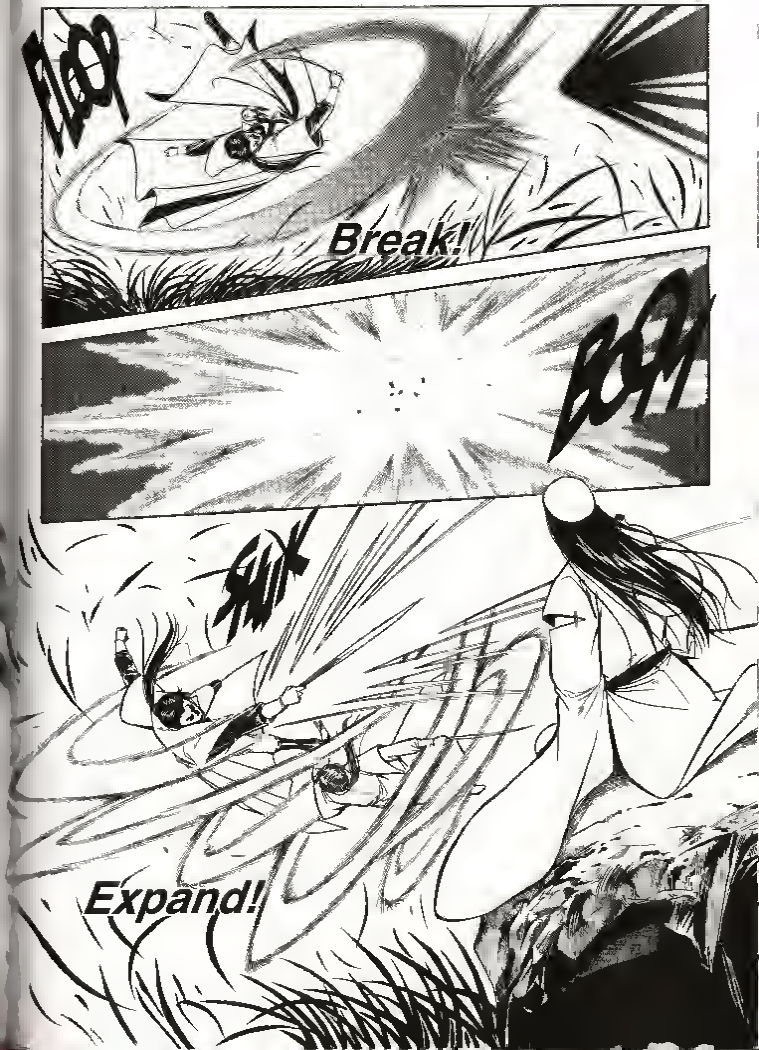
Xing Ling, we're going to gather herbs Coming along?
Blush, blush!

Where on earth is Wang Chan?
Xue Wu, have you seen Wang Chan? He was still around at mealtime. Where is he now?
He's meeting somebody
Oh? The chess player I met last night?
Right. He left a black pawn, right?
Black refers to tonight. The pawn indicates challenge!
Ah! Challenge ...?!

You've arrived before the appointed time.
You know I don't like to be late
Let's start!
SKOSH
SKOSH
SKOSH

The Ultimate Tristar of the Unfathomable Universe?
Cunning move! This close combat allows me no way to turn back!
SHOSH
Very well! The grass shall be my pawns!

Flop
Stick!
BAM
Point!
AAAA


Flop
Break!
BOOM
SHUK
Expand!

Pick!
Hit!
Hang!
Point!
Leap!
Ha! You can't even come within six feet of me! I've got the upper hand!
You can't hold your defence for long. You are going to lose!
BOOM

"Stick" "point" "break" etc are technical terms used in weigi

Link!
Hey! That remains to be seen!
SWOOSH

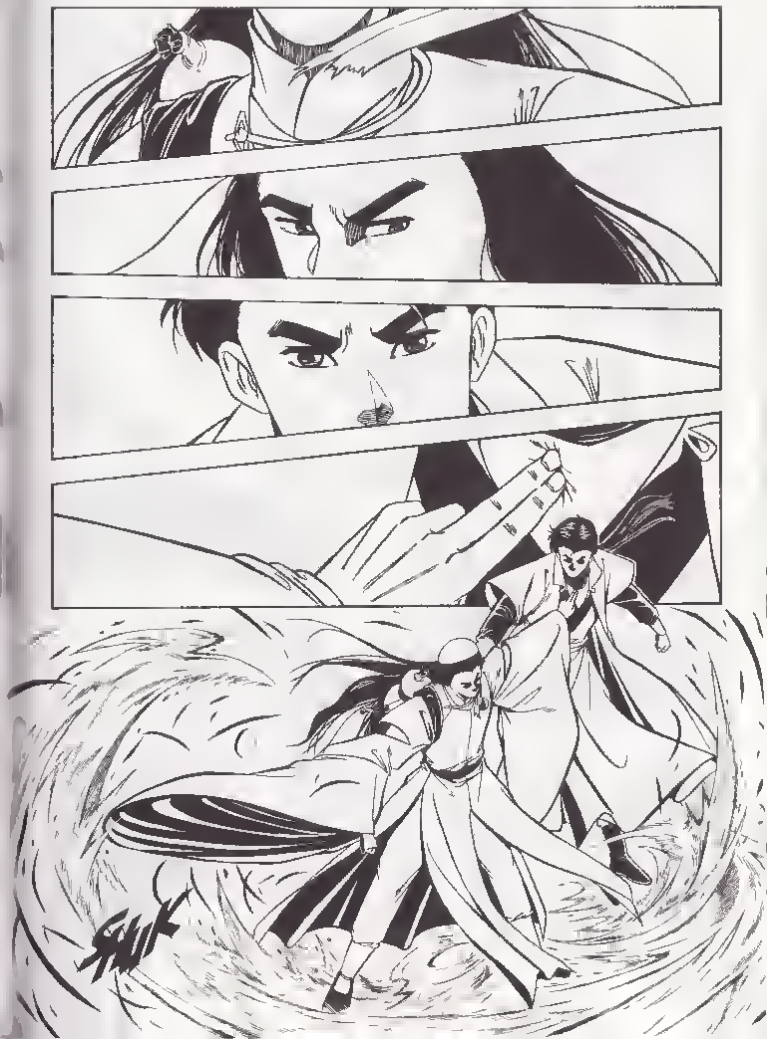
WHIRLWIND SPRING!
Great move! You've not let me down! Watch out for my ALL-DESTRUCTIVE PAWN!

JUNIOR YANG!
Retreat!
Dispense!

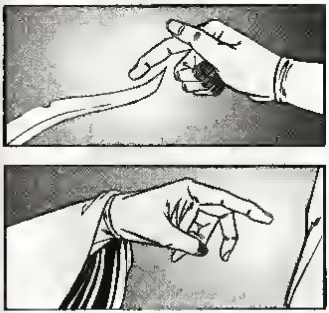
Catch!
Release!

Take it back!
SWOOSH!

BONG
SHIK


SHUK

Hey! What are you up to?
The chess player is no less formidable than you... Wang Chan is in danger fighting him! I must stop them!
Ha! First, do you know where they are?
Second, since he's formidable, are you capable of stopping them?
What shall we do then...?
Come on, you're Wang Chan's senior! How can you sleep here! Call yourself a friend?!
Relax Wang Chan is not as lousy as you think he is He won't return until daybreak
How do you know?
Those two guys are my buddies!



Ha,
ha, ha, ha!

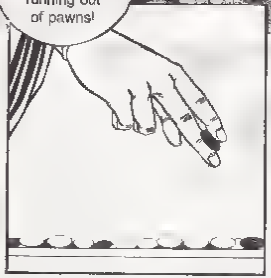
I don't understand. You've been too busy playing chess to practise your skills. But how come your skills are so impressive?
Ha! You're jealous?
Too bad the fight is a draw again. We've had four biennial duels and each time it's a draw.

So much for the warm-up exercise. Let's have the real duel!

Ouch! My headache is coming back!

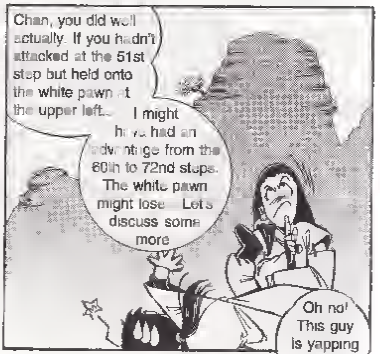
Quick! Don't waste time!
It's been two years? How time flies!

Sorry Another hijack*! Ha! You're running out of pawns!



* "Hijack" is also a technical term of weiqi

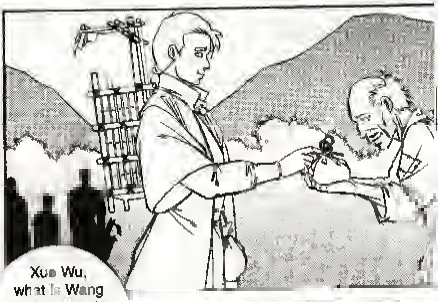
Outcome of the duel. exheustion


Chan, you did well actually. If you hadn't attacked at the 51st step but held onto the white pawn at the upper left... I might have had an advantage from the 60th to 72nd steps. The white pawn might lose... Let's discuss some more.
Oh no! This guy is yapping non stop!

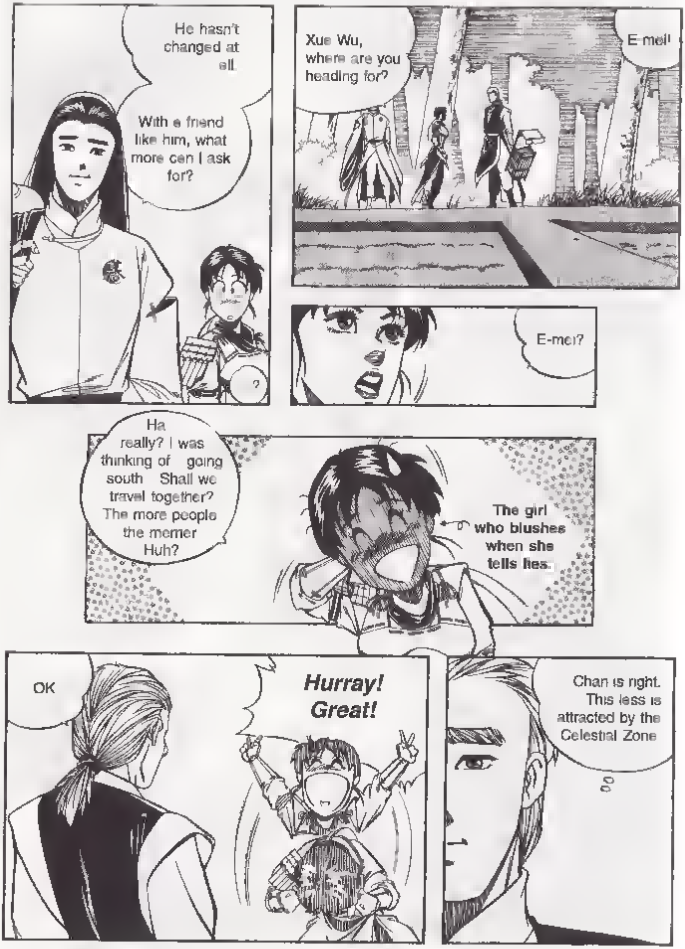
It's all about weiqi. Skip it if you don't understand.

Ha! You've lost again! The next match will be two years from now... until you beat me one day!
Sigh... I'm no match for you in weiqi. Please give me a break!
Ha! At last I've mastered a skill that can defeat a genius like you! How can I give up this chance!
Besides, each victory gives me a lot of satisfaction! Ha! Ha!
Does victory mean so much to you?
It's dawn. I've got to go. Senior and I are setting off soon.
What a hurry! Where to?
To E mei in the south

E-mei? Because of that event?
It's the chance of a lifetime. Senior Wu doesn't want to miss it
E-mei? Oh, I'm seeing a friend near E-mei. We're going the same way
If that's so, let's travel together. We've not done this for a long time
But don't trick me into playing chess with you!
XS
Hee hee...



Xue Wu, what is Wang Chan telling the villagers? He's taking so long!
He's like that. You'll find out soon


He hasn't changed at all.
With a friend like him, what more can I ask for?
Xue Wu, where are you heading for?
E-mei!
E-mei?
Ha really? I was thinking of going south. Shall we travel together? The more people the merrier. Huh?
The girl who blushes when she tells lies.
OK
Hurray! Great!
Chan is right. This lass is attracted by the Celestial Zone

Surprise! To think I've got so many friends travelling with me!
No problem getting chessmates this time! Hee, hee!
Hello, my name is Wei Qi. May I have your name?
Wei Qi? Such a unique name! My name is Xing Ling
Xing connotes happiness and Ling agility. Remember it!

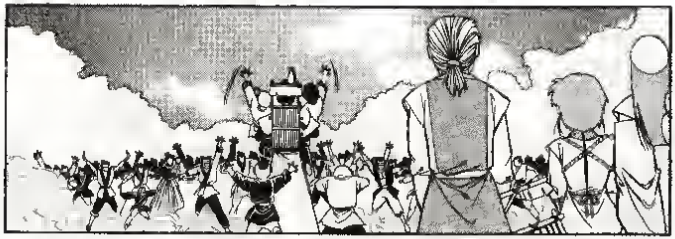
Quickening

HOW DOES THE NAME "THINGS" COME ABOUT?

Xue Wu, it's been quiet for days. We've not met any more evil beings.
You mean you miss them?
Huh—?! Of course not! They look so disgusting!
Wah... sitting around for four hours! How boring!
Xing Ling you've just learnt weiqi. Let's have a game. I'll give you a head start.
I'm not going to play with you! I lose to you miserably every time!
Look! We're reaching the shore!

We're close to Mt E mei Xiaochan where are you going? Why won't you tell me?
We're reaching If all goes well we'll reach there tomorrow and you'll find out
Never mind if you won't tell me!
Wow!
Huh ?
The adorable me is so well-loved!
Come let me carry you

Wow! Master Wang!
Wow!
Pa! Master Wang is here!
Dear, Master Wang is here! Tell all the others!
Hey! Master Wang is here!
Master Xiaochan is here!
He's just outside the village!
Let's go see him!



Xue Wu, though we've noticed his popularity among the villages we've visited,
this village's hospitality is overwhelming!
Ha... this is my first trip with him

Xiaoqi, what about you?

Ha... I'm no better than you

How do you do Sir?
You must be Xiaochan's friends! Wonderful!
Sir, you seem very fond of him
Lass, young as he is, he has saved our village
Oh! Got it! He helped you ward off some demons!
Demons? What demons? We have no demons or ghosts here
Friend we've known him for five years

Five years ago... on a sunny day during early summer...

Out of nowhere came a boy! He warned us of an impending flood and advised us to reinforce the structure of our houses and stock up on food.

Mistaking him for a dimwit uttering rubbish, we mocked at him.

Unabashed by the mockery, he went from door to door, repeating the warning.

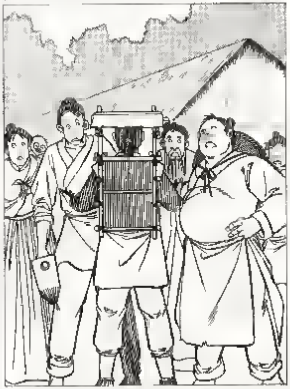
After two days, though we still did not believe him, we were moved by his sincerity. In the end, somebody started taking precautions...

Then, on the third day the weather changed abruptly! Dark clouds gathered, followed by a thundarstorm!!

Next, a big flood came, turning the village into a sea of water! We escaped on account of the precautions we had taken...

Two years later, he came again with news of an impending drought. He advised us to stock water and plant crops that could survive droughts.

Having had the experience, we did as we were told out of respect for him.



And his prediction came true again! He had saved us once more!

Later, he also taught us how to foretell weather changes, how to cultivate lands and how to plant crops.

Since then, life has improved tremendously.

That lad is none other than Xiaochen!
The art of weather forecast that he taught us has been put in catchy phrases
Even little children could recite them
Uncle, I know one of the phrases "A dull yellow across the morning sky across the land will an ocean lie!"
It means that a dull yellow skyline tells of water in the distance
In the sun, the reflected colour of the water will appear to be dull yellow in the sky. From that we can predict a coming flood!!
I can recite another phrase "A quiet sky with tile like clouds Heaven will soon send a drought!"
When the clouds in the sky take the shape of roof-tiles and there's no breeze at all, it's an omen of an imminent drought
I'm cleverer than you! "Hook-like clouds, wet wet ground!" and "Clouds like tiles, hot like hell!"
Those are just some ways of predicting the weather based on the shape, height, thickness and movement of clouds

These two little tykes only regurgitate without any understanding. What smart alecks!

And there's "A red morning sky an afternoon shower A red evening sky, a hot morning after!"
Also "Swallows flying high means fine weather Swallows flying low toretells a shower!"
Hey! I also know this "Between the evening and morning stars, it's the best time to plant wheat so far!"*
I know more...! Hey! Come back!
Wow!
Ha! Xiaochan taught their parents those lines, and they learnt them for fun
Xiaochan has been telling us to "follow the course of nature"
He stresses that by adapting to the confines of nature, we'll reap success with little effort
Wow! Excellent!

** Meaning at daybreak before the western evening stars disappear and the eastern morning stars appear, it is the best time to plant wheat. At other times, wheat planting should be avoided*

Phew! I've never met such hospitable people!
Such a big noisy crowd! I almost fainted in the hut! Ha...!
We'd better have some tea here in the breeze!
Xue Wu Xiaoqi! We're buddies aren't we?
Ha ha! Xing Ling, I know you well enough You're curious about Xiaochan right?
Aiyah!

Xing Ling you'll be surprised that Xiaochan is actually the lord of a valley!
Ah! He's the lord of a valley?
Yup. He's the lord of one of our two remaining fortresses — Mt Dream-Cloud
Though I'm his senior with better powers, I give him my full support
That's because you two are very close
Right. That's one reason. All along my forte lies in combat while he reads more of the humanities
Naturally I surpass him in occult powers. But apart from that, he's way above me
When I was little I used to spend several years on just one subject, mastering only the basics

while he merely took a year to master it alll Since the age ot five, he s mastered the Opposing Principles the Art of War, Leaving the Mundane World and Cultivation
Astronomy, geography astrology medicine economics he s the first person to have mastered all these arts within 10 years!
after the age of 10 I decided not to compete with him except in chess
Sigh thet s why though I m his childhood friend and I m stubborn and emulous
Xing Ling here he comes Want to test him?
Teacher, my mama and I are meeting my uncle at the back of the hill We ll be back at night.
Teacher you must tell me a story tonight. A niu and the rest are coming too

OK But Qiangqiang must listen to Mama OK?

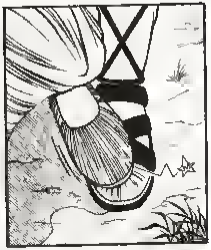
OK

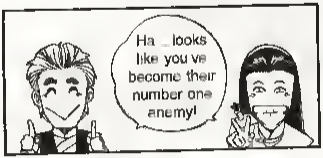
Xiaochan, I need your help

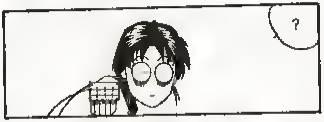
Oh so you're all here!

Xiaochan this bamboo basket is to carry things right?
?

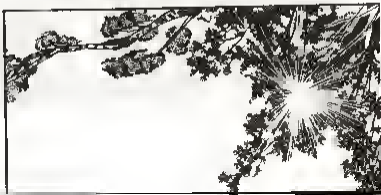
My question is why "things" (dongxi) is homonymous to "east-west"? Why not "north-south" or "north-east"?
A tough question
Well, in the traditional five elements, the east is associated with wood while the west with metal. Both wood and metal can be put into any container. Hence, "things" is homonymous to "east-west".
The south is associated with fire while the north with water. Fire will burn the container while water will leak from it. Thus, "things" isn't referred to as "north-south".
Huh...! really?







The innocent girl does not get it...



For years I've lived a lonely vagrant life. But now, in the trio's company
I've found joy and fulfilment that I've never known before
Ha! Is this what we call "friendship"?
To my surprise, Xiaochan who eats nothing but guigu is such an erudite lad
Sir, we've successfully bred a new type of wheat — suilouxiu

This wheat adapts to weather changes easily, is immune to pests,
and produces more and better rice grains!
Here are 5,780 grains from 50 stalks of sullouxiu.
Cultivate them according to my recommendations and you'll be successful.
It'll bring you a better harvest!
Great! Xiaochan, you've helped us so much. How can we ever repay your kindness?
Think nothing of it. I've only been doing what I ought.
I see...
Chan!
Bump!

What's up?
There's a fire at the back of the hill! Xue Wu and some villagers are rushing there!
Looks like a big fire! Come on!
Hey wait for me!
The back... Oh no! That's Cai's village!

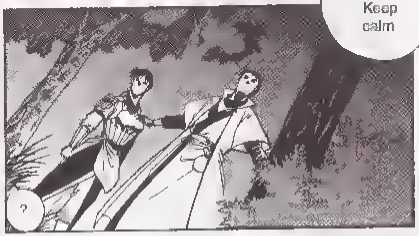
Senior Wu, how is it going?
We've put the fire under control. The villagers will do the rest.
Now, there's a more pressing problem.
When I arrived the villagers were desperately looking for their children amid the fire.
Huh! The kids are missing?
Right. From clues given it must be the doing of the demons!
Trouble!

Chan, come with me. I found this not far away...
Wow! Such a huge footprint! Where did it come from?
Impossible ...!
Chan, what is this?
From its shape, it's probably from an extinct race — the Yimu tribe!
Yimu tribe?

Legend has it that they lived beyond the northern sea, and they were ruthless and belligerent.
But about 1,000 years ago during the battle between Huang Di and Chi You at Zhuolu, the Yimu tribe was exterminated by Huang Di for staging a rebellion for Chi You
Ah! They were wiped out. So how come they're here?
Don't know... They're very dangerous! Let's split and look for the missing children. Be careful!
Ah! Master Wang!! Sob...
Auntie~
Where is Qiang qiang?

He... he's missing! I don't know how... Sob...
Don't worry We'll do our best to find him
Let's go!
Ha! They're quick! I feel safer being with you
(Ha ha! Such a big footprint!)

Chan what shall we do? We still can't find them
Be patient Keep calm



Someone's crying over there!

SH

Wail! Wail...
Ha, ha! Heavenly melodies! Heavenly!
Wail...! Sob!!
That's right Cry louder! Louder! Hee hee!
SH
SH

We've been noticed! What shall I do?
Miss I guess those children aren t yours?
What a direct question! You re making me scared...
Wow! A flower growing on the hair! Such a queer hairstyle!
Give me the children and I won't hurt you
I will not give them to you!
My! Ha, ha ha! What integrity! I I I

GWA
SH

End of TCZ Volume 02

LAOZI : The first great philosopher of China

Between 500 BC and 600 BC, three great philosophers appeared in the Orient at about the same time — Laozi and Confucius from China, and Shakyamuni from India. Their way of thinking have had a great bearing on mankind.

Laozi's original name was Li Er. Why then was he known as Laozi and not Lizi? Legend has it that he was born after spending 72 years in his mother's womb. Right from birth, he was an old man with grey hair. That is why he was known as Laozi! Actually, in ancient times, zi denotes teacher or sage. 'Laozi' is a title of respect for him as he was exalted as a learned old master.

Both Laozi and Confucius emerged towards the end of the Spring and Autumn Period. Being the elder of the two, Laozi had been approached by Confucius for much advice.

Laozi is like a dragon half-hidden among the clouds. It is very difficult to understand him.

Hm... Laozi's ears are quite long too.

Laozi was also known as Laoden. 'Dan' means long ears. Legend has it that Laozi had ears that were about 7 inches long (comparable to Buddha's ears).

* *

Laozi was from the state of Chu and had once served as an official in the library of the Zhou kingdom (equivalent to the head librarian of today's national library). Laozi lived a secluded life in his twilight years. He was last seen riding a green ox heading south from Hangu Pass, leaving only 5,000 words of *Dao De Jing* as a legacy. No one knows where he went. However, he was believed to have lived till 160 or even 200 years old!

* *

Since time immemorial, man has been taught to be strong and strive for success. On the contrary, the great sage Laozi advocated naturalism, nothingness, non contention, humility, meekness and voidness.

Pictures by See Heng

Is Laozi an immortal?

On account of Laozi's profound mystical knowledge, his mysterious whereabouts and exceptional longevity, he was gradually deified. Later, he was even hailed as the founder of Taoism with the title of Supreme Deity (the deity whose Pills of Immortality were eaten up by the Monkey God in *Journey to the West*).

Do you know...

Dao De Jing, the book written over 2,000 years ago, is still in demand today. Laozi is still a popular figure in the Orient. Some years ago, several academic organisations in America unanimously nominated Laozi as the top author in the world's 'top 10 authors throughout the ages'. In fact, *Dao De Jing* has been found to be the number two best-seller in the world, second only to the Bible.

The Celestial Zone

Battle On Moonlit Night 2

An Asiapac Publication

Written & Illustrated by
WEE TIAN BENG

The Celestial Zone

Battle On Moonlit Night 2

This series relates the camaraderie and heart stopping exploits of an extraordinary group of people during the tumultuous Warring States Era. Living in a world of their own — a place known as the Celestial Zone — they worked on cultivating special powers beyond the comprehension of mere mortals. Unfortunately, one group branched into the cultivation of evil power and the showdown between two opposing forces began.

In a bid to save a village poisoned by evil beings, Xing Ling, together with her new friends Wang Chan and Xue Wu, engaged in a fierce battle against ghosts and demons, only to realise that these evil creatures never produced antidote!

However, to their relief, the village was saved by an anonymous person superior in the art of medicine.

The young warriors next met another compatriot from the celestial realm by the name of Wei Qi who was a chess fanatic. As the foursome set off for Mt E-mei, more spine-tingling adventures began to unfold.

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